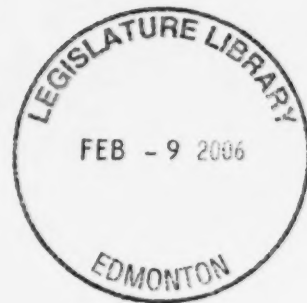


REPORT of the
SELECT SPECIAL ETHICS COMMISSIONER
AND OMBUDSMAN SEARCH COMMITTEE

PART TWO
JUNE 10th, 2003



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

**Select Special Ethics Commissioner
and Ombudsman Search Committee**

801 Legislature Annex
9718 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E4
(403) 427-1350
karen.sawchuk@assembly.ab.ca

June 10th, 2003

To the Honourable Ken Kowalski
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of the Province of Alberta

The Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee has the honour to submit its Report - Part Two containing the recommendation of a candidate to the position of Ombudsman, for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

Janis Tarchuk, MLA
Chair, Select Special Ethics Commissioner
and Ombudsman Search Committee

**REPORT of the Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee
PART TWO**

MANDATE

On November 20, 2002 the Legislative Assembly of Alberta passed the following motion appointing a Search Committee for the purpose of inviting applications for the positions of Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman, and to recommend to the Assembly the applicants considered most suitable for appointment to these positions.

Be it resolved that:

1. A Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta be appointed, consisting of the following members, namely:

Tarchuk (Chair)	Friedel	Pannu
Ducharme (Deputy Chair)	Graham	Taft
Blakeman	O'Neill	Tannas

for the purpose of inviting applications for the positions of Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman and to recommend to the Assembly the applicants it considers most suitable for appointment to those positions.

2. The Chair and Members of the Committee shall be paid in accordance with the schedule of Category "A" Committees provided in the most current Members' Services Committee Allowances Order.
3. Reasonable disbursements by the Committee for advertising, staff assistance, equipment and supplies, rent, travel, and other expenditures necessary for the effective conduct of its responsibilities shall be paid, subject to the approval of the Chair.
4. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Committee may, with the concurrence of the head of the department, utilize the services of members of the public service employed in that department or the staff employed by the Assembly.
5. The Committee may, without leave of the Assembly, sit during a period when the Assembly is adjourned.
6. When its work has been completed, the Committee shall report to the Assembly if it is then sitting. During a period when the Assembly is adjourned, the Committee may release its report by depositing a copy with the Clerk and forwarding a copy to each Member of the Assembly.

REPORT of the Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee
PART TWO

The all-party membership of the Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee is as follows:

Chair:

Mrs. Janis Tarchuk, MLA
Banff-Cochrane (PC)

Deputy Chair:

Mr. Denis Ducharme, MLA
Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)

Members:

Ms Laurie Blakeman, MLA
Edmonton Centre (LIB)

Mr. Gary Friedel, MLA
Peace River (PC)

Ms Marlene Graham, MLA
Calgary-Lougheed (PC)

Mrs. Mary O'Neill, MLA
St. Albert (PC)

Dr. Raj Pannu, MLA
Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)

Dr. Kevin Taft, MLA
Edmonton-Riverview (LIB)

Mr. Don Tannas, MLA
Highwood (PC)

RECOMMENDATION

At the June 10, 2003 meeting of the Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee, the following recommendation was passed by the Committee:

MOVED by Mr. Ducharme that the Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Ombudsman Search Committee recommend to the Legislative Assembly that G. B. (Gord) Button be appointed Ombudsman effective September 15th, 2003, for a 5-year term.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Committee held its first meeting on December 17, 2002 and with the assistance of Ms Alayne Stewart, Manager- Executive Search, Personnel Administration Office (PAO), developed guidelines for advertising, position profiles, search timetables and procedures.

Advertisements for the position of Ombudsman were placed in all of Alberta's daily newspapers, and in the Toronto Globe and Mail during the weekend of January 24th, 2003. The advertisement and position profile were also posted on the Legislative Assembly website.

The Committee decided that it would undertake its review for the position of Ethics Commissioner before completing its review of submissions for the position of Ombudsman. A total of eleven meetings were conducted by the Committee, starting on December 17, 2002 and ending with its final meeting on June 10, 2003. The Committee's Report - Part One, containing its recommendation for the position of Ethics Commissioner, was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, May 8, 2003.

The Committee received a total of 163 applications for the position of Ombudsman, with 146 applications from Alberta, 3 from British Columbia, 1 from Saskatchewan, 2 from Manitoba, 7 from Ontario, 1 from Nova Scotia, 2 from Nunavut, and 1 from outside Canada. Executive Search, PAO completed comprehensive screening reports for each candidate and the Committee reviewed the applications received along with the screening reports to determine a short-list for preliminary interviews. At the direction of the Committee, Executive Search conducted preliminary interviews with 10 candidates and the Committee then selected 4 candidates for final interviews, which were held on May 15th and May 16th, 2003. One candidate withdrew her application from the competition.

After the interview process was completed, it was the decision of the Committee that G. B. (Gord) Button be recommended to the Legislative Assembly as Ombudsman for the Province of Alberta.

BIOGRAPHY OF G. B. (GORD) BUTTON

Gord Button was born and raised in Nipawin, Saskatchewan. Following high school he attended the University of Saskatchewan and received a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Sociology and Psychology.

He joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1971. After receiving his recruit field training he was posted to Alberta until 1990, where he performed a variety of policing duties throughout the province.

In 1990 Chief Superintendent Button was commissioned to the rank of Inspector and assumed the position as Officer In Charge Staffing and Personnel in Newfoundland. He remained in Newfoundland for ten years, serving in Contract Policing and Intelligence as well as Staffing and Personnel. He was promoted to the rank of Superintendent in 1998 as the Human Resources Officer, Atlantic Region. In 1999 Gord was promoted to his present rank and transferred to Headquarters, Ottawa where he assumed the position of Director General of Organizational Renewal and Effectiveness in the Human Resources Directorate.

In January 2002 Gord was transferred to Edmonton where he took command of his final position with the RCMP, as Officer In Charge Criminal Operations for the Province of Alberta.

Gord Button and his wife, Barb, presently reside in Edmonton. They enjoy golfing, camping and curling. Gord and Barb have two children - their son Chris and daughter Sarah.



119674

Ombudsman



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ALBERTA

January 2003

OMBUDSMAN

(A) POSITION SUMMARY

The Ombudsman promotes fairness in public administration and investigates complaints from individuals regarding unfair administrative actions or decisions made by provincial departments, agencies, boards or commissions, *and some professional bodies outside of government*. The Alberta Ombudsman Act provides the mechanism for the Ombudsman to investigate, review investigation results, and decide on an appropriate course of action. Overseeing these responsibilities involves *leading professional staff, meeting with individuals presenting varied requests, and consulting with* ministers, elected officials, senior officials, government employees *and professional bodies*.

(B) RELATIONSHIP TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

As an Officer of the Legislature, the Lieutenant Governor in Council appoints Alberta's Ombudsman, on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly.

The Ombudsman reports to the Legislative Assembly through the Speaker with respect to annual reports, and matters relating to the Ombudsman's jurisdiction or authority under the Ombudsman Act.

The Select Standing Committee has the responsibility for reviewing the budget and operations of the Offices of the Ombudsman, Auditor General, Chief Electoral Officer, Ethics Commissioner, and Information and Privacy Commissioner. The Select Standing Committee is comprised of Members appointed from all parties in the Assembly.

The Committee reviews the annual budget estimates, and the salary paid to the Ombudsman. Should questions be raised regarding any of these matters, the Chair of the Select Standing Committee advises the elected members. The Ombudsman meets with the Select Standing Committee during the year, as necessary.

The Ombudsman may also liaise with individual members of the Assembly in relation to complaints lodged by constituents.

(C) MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- *Provides leadership to the Office of the Ombudsman and oversees the performance of the Office as an independent reviewer of public administration that requires sound business practices and adherence to legislated mandates.*
- Investigates complaints against the administrative activities of the Alberta Government, provided that the individual has first attempted to resolve the problem through all available appeal process. Official complaints to the Ombudsman must be made in writing, although information is frequently provided in response to oral complaints.

- Reviews all complaints received to ensure they are within the Ombudsman's authority, and assigns the complaints to senior investigators for review.
- Reviews all investigation results and decides on an appropriate course of action. If the investigation finds that the individual has been treated improperly or unfairly, recommendations are made on how the problem should be resolved.
- Initiates an investigation without the need of a complaint, although the primary focus of the Ombudsman's caseload comes as a result of complaints sent by individuals in the province.
- Conducts investigations referred by a Committee of the Legislative Assembly, or by a Minister of the Crown. Reports an opinion and the reasons for it to the appropriate Minister and the department or agency concerned.
- *Promotes the awareness of the role of the Office of the Ombudsman role through public presentations and meetings with individuals and groups.*

(D) FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Ombudsman provides leadership and guidance to a staff of 21 through a management team. The functional areas of the office include Legal Services, Investigative Services (Northern Region and Southern Region), Corporate Services, and Information and Referral Services.

The Ombudsman is responsible for the effective management of the offices located in Edmonton and Calgary, and oversees a budget of approximately \$1,958,000.

(E) CONTACTS/ PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The Ombudsman meets with complainants, interest groups, the academic community and other individuals the Ombudsman feels can be of assistance in resolving complaints. In the course of an investigation or general discussion the Ombudsman consults with ministers, elected officials, senior officials of departments, government employees, and professional bodies.

(Insert Professional Associations?)

(F) TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Lieutenant Governor in Council appoints the Ombudsman on the recommendation of the Assembly for a term of five (5) years, with provision for reappointment. Under legislative requirements, the Ombudsman may not be a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

The position salary range of \$95,000 - \$110,000 is currently under review and will be established by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices. A comprehensive benefit package is offered. The Office of the Ombudsman is located in Edmonton, with a regional office located in Calgary.

(G) THE PERSON

The demands of this position require attributes that go beyond a specific discipline or academic achievement. Beyond the knowledge, experience and skill requirements of the role, applicants apply a balanced common sense approach while using sound judgment, and demonstrate fairness, patience, integrity, and tolerance. Credibility in a chosen career, respect within the community, and a public orientation that is sensitive to current needs and future expectations are key for this role. Canadian citizenship is required.

1. Knowledge/Experience Requirements

- Extensive and varied experience dealing with people from all backgrounds
- *Proven success in leading, managing and developing staff*
- Knowledge of law and an understanding of administrative law concepts including natural justice
- In-depth knowledge of Alberta and its people
- Experience resolving conflicts
- Working knowledge of the parliamentary system

2. Skills and Abilities

- *Strong verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills*
- *Sound investigative, problem solving and consultative abilities*
- Common sense approach to decision making
- *Information management and technology skills*